



Field Trip to Tsubame-Sanjo

By SHINOBU KOJIMA

On August 28th, as a government-concierge project to discover attractiveness of provincial areas, four members of Les Clefs d'Or Japan visited Tsubame-Sanjo area in Niigata Prefecture. It is easily accessible by Shinkansen (bullet train) from Tokyo.



On the first day, we visited four places; Hocho Kobo Tadafusa, Uchiyama Farm, Gyokusendo and Ohizumbussan Co., Ltd.

Tadafusa factory is famous for manufacturing kitchen knives as well as domestic and professional cutleries. We were educated that there are 21 processes to make a knife. After the factory tour, we couldn't help but appreciate the beauty of the knives.

Uchiyama Farm has been growing rice and over 50 kinds of vegetables. We enjoyed delicious *bento* box with local ingredients and specially made gelato on the ridge of rice fields.

Gyokusendo is a workshop making hand-hammered copperware for centuries. Their building is a designated tangible cultural property of the nation. They presented us their various works such as shape forming, coloring, annealing, and others.

Ohizumbussan Co., Ltd. is a cutlery manufacturing company that has been in business for 74 years. They produce a variety of products with high stainless steel processing technology. They also create various cutleries designed by two Danish designers.

On the second day, we had a short tour of Yahiko shrine with a volunteer guide. Then we visited Tojiro Co. Ltd.; one of the top-rated manufacturers of knives using compound material. They receive high reputation by chefs. They also conduct "Blanking Art" with wasted material and this was quite creative.

"Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival" is held in October. This festival offers an opportunity to get a close-up view of product making. Furthermore, there are some factories you could visit at any time. I recommend everyone to visit this very attractive Tsubame-Sanjo and feel and experience the pride of the craftsmen.

New Full Member from Japan!

Les Clefs d'Or Japan is proud to introduce Mr. Akhil Tiwari, the Chef Concierge at the Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi as our new member. As of October 1st, 2017, Les Clefs d'Or Japan consists of 2 honorary members, 28 full members and 16 associate members.



10th Asian Congress

By AKHIL TIWARI

We all had a chance to meet our counterparts from various countries. Great ideas were exchanged and obstacles were shared together with the possibilities for improvements.

We had the opportunity to know and experience Indian culture through the great performance of traditional Indian music and dance performed by Amhi Mavle and Utsaav musical groups.

Mr. Edwin Saldanha, President of Les Clefs d'Or India, delivered an inspiring speech in which he induced us to keep moving forward with our great passion and skills. We all understood that we are running a brand and unlike other big companies, we do not have separate entire workforce of professionals to protect it. Only we can keep our brand protected by any damage or misuse to keep its dignity.

It was great to hear and learn from Mr. Sanju Soni, Vice President and General Manager of Trident Nariman Point, Mumbai, that there is no perfect job description about the concierge. Concierge job is to just go beyond the expectations and which I truly accept and believe in it.

Explanation by Mr. Simon Thomas, International President, Les



Clefs d'Or, about the brands that how it works and how to keep it intact was a great learning for all of us. He stated that brand becomes expectations, believes and trust and these three words turn to promise and we must keep and deliver it accordingly.

We learned about the similarities which we share in various cultures from our guest speaker, Mr. Viren D'sa. The another guest speaker, Professor Vikas Agarwal, explained that the situation can be turned from Glitch to Wow, should we constantly monitor the guest satisfaction.

It was nice to hear from Mr. Taljinder Singh (Area Director and General Manager, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai) that Google and other Apps can do a part of concierge's job, however concierge position can't be challenged by any such kind of Apps. The first hand information which experienced concierge can provide is a far cry for such Apps which clearly explains the importance and need of a true concierge.

We got the opportunity to see the famous tourist attractions of the city of Mumbai and enjoyed the Indian cuisine as well.

Finally, I will say that it was a great learning trip and thank you friendly Mumbai with all our love, affection and with a promise to visit again.

August Monthly Meeting

On August 23rd, the monthly meeting was held in Yokohama with attendance of 25 members. We invited Ms. Yabe, the licensed tour guide who has a profound knowledge of *kabuki*, a traditional Japanese performance, and were lectured to expand our knowledge. We also had the opportunity to test-ride the SKY Duck, an amphibian sightseeing bus. We very much enjoyed the ride as well as the sea breeze of Yokohama.



September Monthly Meeting

On September 20th, the monthly meeting was held in Tokyo with attendance of 38 members. During the meeting, two of our associate members gave mini-lectures. The Louis Vuitton gave a lecture on their VIP services and the Fuji-Torii on the superlative craftsmanship of the Meiji era.

